

**State of the State**  
**Governor Charles Haskell**  
**December 2, 1907**

To the Legislature:

Pursuant to Section 9, Article 6, of the Constitution, I have the honor to submit the following recommendations:

**Limit Lobbying.**

Believing that all classes of people who feel that the interest of themselves or their employers entitle them to be heard before the Legislative bodies of the State, but that such hearing should be open to the public, I earnestly recommend the adoption of such rules and the passage of such laws as will limit the privilege of the lobbyist to open oral arguments or public print, and that a suitable penalty be provided punishing any offender against the rules or laws that you may provide or enact; that this apply not only to lobbying before your Honorable Body, but before municipal legislative departments.

**Secret Employment.**

I am advised that many of the companies, or individuals, seeking to supply the public within our State with school books and other necessities [*sic*], make it a practice to secretly employ many of those connected with schools, or other professions and official positions, upon whose advice the public is supposed, and has a right, to rely. The secret character of such employment places the public at a disadvantage. In my judgment no one connected with the public schools or other public service of the State should be permitted to accept employment or compensation from those who sell supplies to the public or the State and further, that secret employment by such persons or institutions should also be prohibited.

I therefore recommend that all such employes [*sic*] or representatives or persons or corporations seeking to sell school books or other supplies to the public should be required immediately upon accepting such employment to evidence that fact by such recorded notice as you deem proper, giving public notice of the fact that they are a representative of such person or corporation, and that a failure to give such public notice shall be declared to be a crime, and be punishable by such fine or imprisonment as you may find proper.

**Territorial Accounts.**

I ask that by proper enactment you authorize the Governor to employ such Attorneys or Accountants as may be necessary to audit the territorial accounts of Oklahoma Territory in all departments up to the date of their surrendering their several departments to the State officers, to the end that public accounts may have an accurate and approved basis for their beginning, and to authorize the expenditure of public funds necessary for this purpose.

**Holiday.**

The opinion seems to prevail in many localities that the holiday recently declared to exist by virtue of a proclamation of the Territorial Acting Governor was applicable only to the banking business of the State, and numerous letters and petitions have been received by me since statehood was proclaimed that I extend this holiday protection to farmers and other business men [*sic*]. I have taken no action in the premises, but recommend that the law on this subject should be that so far as any holiday, or series of

holidays, may operate to suspend the collections of debts or other suspension of business, that the law shall always be uniform, giving the same degree of protection to everybody.

#### **Removal of Causes.**

Referring to the provisions of the Federal law that a citizen or another State (natural or artificial) may in an action by or against a citizen of this State either by original filing or by subsequent removal, avoid the Courts of this State and have his case tried in the Federal Courts, in case the amount involved be more than two thousand dollars; there are many instances in which I consider this is unfair to the people of our State and gives a special privilege to the non-citizen; greater, I believe, than [sic] Congress intended they should have; and I also believe that Congress in its wisdom contemplated that the States might regulate this in certain cases. For example, the foreign corporation, which practically domiciles itself in our State by setting up its agency, obtaining a certificate authorizing it to do business within our State, and constantly dealing with our citizens, it is my opinion that such corporations should be required to submit differences with our citizens to the Courts of the State. While I do not reflect upon the Federal Courts as an inadequate opportunity for securing justice, the limited number of Federal Courts makes it necessary for many of our people to incur the expense and loss of time traveling great distances and waiting for their day of trial in a crowded forum, instead of being permitted to enjoy the conveniences of a Court in a County where they reside, and where the cause of action arose.

I find that many foreign corporations have taken their charters from distant States in order to enjoy such special privileges. I also find that they avail themselves often of the special privilege of carrying causes to the Federal Courts as a means of inducing unfair settlement.

I believe that these corporations which come into our State to do business and obtain a State license for that purpose, are to be welcomed by us as a part of business interests of the State, and that they should have just protection and an opportunity to secure justice in our State Courts but I do not believe that they should enjoy this special privilege, which, while a favor to them, is a hardship upon our citizens.

Therefore, believing that Congress intended that States might provide reasonable limitation upon the general provisions, I recommend that such removal of causes from the State to the Federal Courts by foreign corporations shall work a revocation of their license to do business within the State.

#### **Banks and Bank Deposits.**

The efficiency of government depends upon stability, and in no line of business is stability more important than in banking. Wavering, vacillating, uncertain conditions breed distrust, and ultimate destruction.

Recent events, in my judgment, make it desirable that the laws of our State should be so reformed as to insure the safety of every dollar deposited in the banks of our State, and to this end I recommend to your consideration and hope for the enactment by you, of a code of banking laws upon an absolutely safe foundation, and forever relieve the depositors from unrest and doubt, as well as from actual loss.

The present banking laws should be supplemented or amended to include the following provisions, and existing laws in conflict therewith repealed.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 1, Article 14, of the Constitution, I suggest the creation, by law, of an advisory board, called State Banking Board, to be

composed of the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, the President of the Board of Agriculture, the State Treasurer, and the State Auditor, with such supervisory powers over the banking department and the acts of the Bank Commissioners as may not be in conflict with the provisions of the Constitution.

**Bank Commissioner.**

I suggest that the Bank Commissioner's compensation be fixed at not exceed \$ . . . . . dollars per year.

The Bank Commissioner to appoint all necessary assistants, examiners, and other necessary employes [*sic*] and fix their compensations, all subject to the approval of the State Banking Board.

**Protection of Depositors.**

The State Banking Board, within thirty days after the passage and approval of the necessary legislation, be authorized and required to levy an assessment upon each and every bank subject to the provisions of the banking laws of the State, equivalent to one per cent of the deposits of such bank. Said assessment to be collected by the Bank Commissioner in such installments, and at such times as the State Banking Board may direct.

The amount so collected to constitute a reserve fund, to be known as the Depositors' Guaranty Fund for the protection of bank depositors in such of said banks as may thereafter become insolvent.

Said fund, so collected, should be properly safe-guarded and held or deposited subject to the order of the State Banking Board for the purpose aforesaid. And said fund, together with the interest or other income, thereon, less the expenses incurred by the State in administernig [*sic*] the provisions of this Section, should be and remain a fund for the aforesaid purpose of protecting and paying the depositors of any such bank that may become insolvent, or unable to pay its depositors.

After the collection of said one per cent, and for the purpose of maintaining said Depositors' Guaranty Fund at a sum equal to said original collection of one per cent after the liquidation of the liabilities to depositors of any defaulting bank, said State Banking board shall be authorized and required from time to time to levy and collect such additional assessments as may be necessary to maintain said fund unimpaired, so that the same shall at all times be equal to one per cent of the total deposits in all banks which may be entitled to the benefit of said fund.

In the event of the payment out of said fund to the depositors of any defaulting or insolvent bank, the State shall have a first lien, for the benefit of said Depositors' Guaranty Fund, to the extent of such payment upon all the assets of said bank; all statutory liabilities of stockholders and directors of insolvent banks may likewise be enforces by the State for the benefit of said fund.

The provisions of this Section shall apply to all banks organized or existing under the laws of this State, and to national banks which may voluntarily apply in writing to and be approved by, said Banking Board for the benefit of their depositors of the provisions of this Section, and contract to pay such assessments for the purposes aforesaid as may be levied upon them under the provisions hereof.

Provided, however, that wherein any of the provisions of the banking laws of this State as to examinations, reserve fund, liquidation, or other provisions, shall conflict with the laws of the United States as to National banks, that in such cases the National banks

shall be deemed to have complied with the provisions of the laws of this State upon their compliance with the laws of the United States.

Banks organized after the passage and approval of this law should be required to pay into the Depositors' Guaranty Fund one per cent of their paid-up capital; provided, however, that such payment should not be required of new banks organized by the consolidation or reorganization of existing banks which have previously complied with this law.

The Bank Commissioner shall deliver to each bank that has complied with the provisions of this Section a certificate in writing, containing the name of said bank, and certifying that it has complied with the provisions of the laws of this State for the protection of bank depositors which certificates shall be kept by said bank displayed in a public place in its banking room.

#### **Bank Officers and Directors.**

Any director, or other officer, or any bank, may be removable from office for incompetency, dishonesty, or violation of the banking laws of this State on recommendation of the Bank Commissioner, approved by the State Banking Board.

The loaning of funds of a bank to any stockholder, director, or other officer, in excess of the limit authorized by law, should constitute a crime under the laws of this State on the part of the borrower and of the officer authorizing the loan and be punishable as in case of larceny of a like amount.

#### **Directors' Qualifications and Liability.**

No person should be qualified to act as a director of any bank in this State unless he is the bona fide owner of at least five hundred dollars par value of fully paid stock of such bank, and the directors' liability should be the same as that of directors' of National banks.

#### **Inspections.**

I recommend at least two inspections each year instead of one.

#### **Cash Reserve.**

The reserve required under the present law I recommend should be increased in all cases where the deposits exceed double the amount of cash capital and surplus of the bank. That this increase should be an additional ten per cent of all such excess of deposits.

#### **Reserve Agents.**

No deposit of any bank, operating under the laws of this State, should be counted as reserve unless held by a reserve agency, approved by the Bank Commissioners and State Banking Board.

#### **Emergency.**

In view of the abnormal conditions existing, I recommend that an emergency be declared, requiring this Act to become effective immediately upon its passage and approval.

#### **Live Stock [sic] at Large.**

In many parts of the State there are large areas of unfenced and unoccupied land, and where the people of the community desire to permit live stock [sic] to run at large. I recommend the adoption of a law that will permit the people of any community in some proper way to deal with this question and permit the live stock [sic] in that locality to run at large, or to be herded, as a fair majority of the local citizens may determine.

### **Suffrage.**

The question of an election law is one that many Members of the Legislature have given extended consideration, and we are advised and prepared to submit proposed enactments from which the Legislature will no doubt produce laws satisfactory to all concerned.

### **Mandatory Primaries.**

Sections 4 and 5 of Article 3 of the Constitution provide for a mandatory primary for the nominations of all elective officers, United States Senators included, and makes it the duty of the Legislature to enact laws making this provision effective. In this connection I recommend:

That such primaries be held at the expense of the State, and by all political parties upon the same day throughout the State, and all its subdivisions.

That no candidate for office be required to make payment of any fee to secure the printing of his name upon the ballot.

That the amount of money that any candidate may expend, directly or indirectly, or that others may expend for him, incident to his candidacy for the primary nomination, be limited, rated as to the various officers as the Legislature may deem wise, and that every such candidate at the primary election shall at the proper time (designated in the law) file a sworn statement of all moneys expended by him or in his interest by others, and the purpose for which each item of expense was incurred.

### **Purity of Elections.**

I recommend that proper laws be enacted, making it a criminal offense for a corporation of any kind to contribute money, or other thing of value, directly or indirectly, to influence any nomination of a candidate for public office, or the election of any public officer, and that substantial penalty be imposed for violations of such law.

### **Employing Relatives.**

I recommend that the passage of a law providing that no public officer shall be permitted to appoint, or in any way employ, at the expense of the public, any member of his family.

### **Initiative and Referendum.**

Referring to the provision of the Constitution of the subject of initiative and referendum, I earnestly request that the Legislature immediately make suitable provision for carrying the same into effect.

### **Pardons, Paroles and Reprieves.**

The Governor has granted no pardons, paroles or reprieves.

### **Board of Arbitration and Conciliation.**

I recommend to the Legislature the creation of a Board of Arbitration and Conciliation authorized by Section 21, Article 6, of the Constitution, and also a free State Employment Bureau, and the regulation of private employment agencies.

### **Mine and Factory Inspection.**

I recommend the immediate passage of laws carrying Section 26, Article 6 of the Constitution into effect, and that this be classed as emergency legislation.

### **Board of Agriculture.**

In view of the extended duties and larger area under the administration of the State Board of Agriculture, I recommend that in addition the compensation already provided by law, that the compensation of the President of the Board of Agriculture shall

be increased to a total of \$6 per day for the time which he may actually devote to the duties of that office and that the limitation of the 20 days' service during the year shall not apply to the President of the Board.

#### **Revenue and Taxation.**

The conditions as to the levying and collecting of taxes throughout the State are peculiar and will require legislation to place them upon a uniform and equitable basis, particularly the State levy. It appears that there may be injustice in the collection of a State levy from taxpayers in the portion of said State formerly known as Oklahoma Territory, there being no provision for a simultaneous collection in the remaining portion of the State; likewise to provide for a State levy in the Indian Territory part of the new State upon a valuation at the full market value of property as required by the Constitution would be unjust upon that portion of the State. In order to avoid injustice to any part of the State, and in case it is found these above conditions would be an injustice upon the people, of either portions of the State, I recommend legislation providing for the early valuation, for tax purposes, of all taxable property throughout the State to the end that each and every part of the State may under the same valuation and at the same time be called upon for the payment of State taxes, and in taxing property. I especially call your attention to the provision of the Constitution which authorizes the levy of a tax on incomes, franchises, production and inheritances. I recommend that all incomes in excess of three thousand dollars per year be taxed; that all inheritances in excess of ten thousand dollars be taxed, and that all franchises and productions be taxes, all such taxes to be at a fair and equitable rate, particularly to the end that all classes of property, sources of benefit and incomes may bear their just proportion of the expenses of the government, and that this legislation be classed as emergency, and remind you that Express Companies should be made tax payers.

I recommend that a proper emergency Act be passed where the Constitution does not already cover the subject, authorizing purchase by the State, from any available fund, of State, County or District bonds or warrants to such extent as may be necessary to enable the conducting of public business on a cash basis until tax collections may enable the conduct of public business without doing a miscellaneous warrant business and the debts contracted prior to the organization of new Counties, Townships or School Districts, shall not be afterward ratified or paid except upon examination and approval by the District Court.

#### **Tax Limitation and Valuations.**

I earnestly call your attention to the provision of the Constitution requiring all property to be valued at its market value. This I believe to be the only way to insure the large properties of the State paying their fair share of taxes as compared with smaller properties, and the provision limiting the rate of taxation being adhered to in my judgment insures the development and upbuilding of the homes of the State and guards against the reckless expenditure of tax money where an unlimited amount of taxes might be assessed, and the welfare of our State depends upon comfortable homes more than upon extravagant public buildings.

#### **State and School Lands.**

I recommend immediate legislation for the sale of school lands according to the grant under which said land was obtained by the State, and the provisions of our Constitution.

**Investment of Permanent School and Other Educational Funds.**

I recommend the enacting of such laws as are contemplated in Section 66, Article 11, of the Constitution, and that the same be classed as emergency legislation, emergency in this case being that the fund now available may be offered at the earliest possible moment to the first preference class of investments; namely: to the farmers of the State upon farm mortgages, the interest rate to be fixed upon this class of investments should not exceed five per cent per annum. In this connection I also recommend the adoption of a law in substance as follows:

First mortgages upon improved real estate within this State, and in no case above fifty per cent of the reasonable valuation of the land, exclusive of buildings shall be accepted as security in each case under the laws of this State where bond, guaranty or indemnity is required.

**Education.**

I recommend immediate emergency legislation carrying into effect the provision of the Constitution providing for separate schools for children of African descent. I recommend that Section 7, Article 13, of the Constitution, providing for the teaching of agriculture, horticulture, stock feeding and domestic sciences in the common schools of the State be enacted.

I recommend a spirit of liberality in promoting and sustaining all public schools and higher educational institutions.

**The Races.**

I recommend the immediate passage, by emergency Act, of laws providing for separate railroad coaches and waiting rooms for persons of African descent, and that the same be of equal comfort and convenience with the coaches and waiting rooms provided for other passengers.

**Public Roads.**

I recommend that an immediate provision be made employing the convict labor of the State upon the construction of public highways and other public works within the State and that the legislation authorized in Article 16 of the Constitution be passed for the purpose of enabling the general improvement of public roads throughout the State.

**Firemen.**

Section 41, Article 5 of the Constitution authorized Cities to pension their aged and disabled worthy firemen, subject to the enactment of proper laws by the Legislature. I earnestly recommend that his provision be given its intended effect.

**State Militia.**

Recommendations as to the State militia will be presented to you at a later date; the absence of reports, conditions and recommendations prevent my giving further consideration of this subject at this time.

**Labor**

I recommend the enactment of the legislation provided for in the Constitution for the protection of health, life and privileges of the laboring class, and the limiting of the maximum of hours of service upon railroad trains, examination and disqualifications of engineers, conductors and dispatchers that the safety of the employes [*sic*] and passengers may be better assured.

### **Public Institutions.**

I recommend that the State University at Norman, the Normal Schools at Alva, Weatherford and Edmond, the Preparatory School at Tonkawa, and the Agricultural and Mechanical School at Stillwater be declared to be permanent State institutions of the character name, and that the Legislature provide for such additional education institutions of like character in other parts of the State as immediate necessity may demand.

The legal status of the Colored Agricultural and Normal School at Langston is now under consideration and hence I defer suggestion as to that institution.

### **Subdivided Counties.**

I recommend that immediate emergency legislation be passed providing for the equitable division of assets and liabilities of all Counties wherein there has been subdivision, as they existed under Territorial government in the former Territory of Oklahoma.

### **Prosecutions by Information.**

All Attorneys for the State and County Attorneys being empowered to present criminal charges by information, I recommend the adoption of proper laws requiring witnesses to appear before such Attorneys and give evidence as to criminal offenses, concerning which subject the Attorney may require knowledge preliminary to the filing of such information.

### **State Printing.**

In order to protect the State and all its Counties and subdivisions from extravagant demands and prices, I believe in the absence of an opportunity to make safe and fair contract for the benefit of the whole State and its various subdivisions, that it will be best for the State to erect, maintain and operate a State printing plant, which shall supply the blank books, school books, court reports, legislative printing reports, laws, and other necessary public work, and to further advise us all upon this subject. I recommend that the Legislature carefully look into the question, and pass such laws as shall insure economic use of such books and supplies, and their production to the State and its Counties and other subdivisions at a reasonable price.

### **Railroads, Other Corporations, Trusts and Monopolies.**

I am pleased to advise that the railroads seem inclined, in the brief period of Statehood, to observe the laws of our State and the Corporation Commission are obviously making good progress in the interest of the public without unjustly embarrassing corporate interests. A little further progress may develop the necessity for some additional legislation, in which event the Corporation Commission will report the fact to the Legislature.

Trust and monopoly practices should also receive your attention, and a little later the Attorney General, who is now conducting active and efficient investigation will be able to advise what further law is needed on that subject. I have at this time, however, to earnestly recommend that in defining penalties for violation of the laws against trusts and monopolies that it is most important that punishment by imprisonment in all cases shall be a part, at least, of the penalty. It is by imprisonment of the real offenders that the best results will be obtained.

### **Miscellaneous.**

Owing, no doubt, to the short time that has expired since Statehood was proclaimed, the Boards of the various institutions of the State, the Corporation



Commission and many of the public officers have not made their reports, or recommendations, that the Constitution required of them, but such as have been made I submit copies hereto, being:

State Treasurer.

State Auditor.

State Examiner and Inspector.

Attorney General.

For the Governor's office, I ask privilege to appoint a private secretary at a salary of two thousand dollars per annum, an executive clerk at a salary of fifteen hundred dollars per annum, clerk at a salary of twelve hundred dollars per annum, and a stenographer at a salary of twelve hundred dollars per annum, and for such allowance for contingent expenses such as postage, express, rewards, arrests and other enforcements of the law and the conduct of the office as the Legislature, after consideration, may deem sufficient in meeting these items of expense.

#### **Petitions and Letters**

Numerous petitions and letters have been filed with me, most of which I cover in substance, yet owing to their extended detail and usual merit. I hand them to you.

Respectfully submitted,

THE GOVERNOR,

C. N. HASKELL.

## **About Digitizing the Governors' State of the State Addresses**

Section 9, Article 6 of the Constitution of Oklahoma provides as follows:

“At every session of the Legislature, and immediately upon its organization, the Governor shall communicate by message, delivered to joint session of the two houses, upon the condition of the State; and shall recommend such matters to the Legislature as he shall judge expedient.”

From statehood in 1907 to present, the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors have been recorded in pamphlets, booklets, and Senate Journals. One could not foresee the toll that time would take on the earliest of these documents. When these items first arrived at the Oklahoma State Archives, the leather bindings had dried considerably, cracking the spines significantly. Due to the acidity in the paper, many pages have darkened with age. Some of the more brittle pamphlets crumble at the slightest touch.

Thus when we decided to digitize these materials, we faced two challenges: the safety of the original documents and ease of viewing/reading for patrons. Our primary objective was that the unique and historic qualities of the documents should be reflected in the website. However, older fonts would not digitize clearly when scanned and even using a flatbed scanner could cause the bindings to worsen. An image of each page would increase download time considerably and any hand-written remarks or crooked pages could be lost. We decided to retype each document with every period, comma, and misspelled word to maintain the integrity of the document while placing some unique images of the documents online. Patrons can download the addresses quicker and view them clearer as well as save, print, and zoom with the Adobe Acrobat Reader. We have learned much from our efforts and we hope that our patrons are better served in their research on the state of the state addresses of Oklahoma's Governors.